

FEMA Awards \$50 million in BRIC Grants to Fund Resiliency Projects in PA and VA

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PHILADELPHIA— The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is announcing more than \$50 million in funding for two flood mitigation projects - one in Philadelphia and one in Virginia Beach. This funding comes from the Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) grant program and was awarded to the Commonwealths of Pennsylvania and Virginia on Monday.

In Philadelphia, over \$25M will be used to fund the Cohocksink Flood Mitigation Project. The money will be used by the City of Philadelphia to pay for construction of the final phase of a six-phase flood mitigation project. FEMA BRIC funding will pay for 70% of the \$35.7M total project cost for the last phase. The Cohocksink Project will double capacity of the combined sewer system through the construction of new sewer infrastructure and green stormwater infrastructure systems in the flood prone Northern Liberties, Ludlow, and South Kensington neighborhoods.

This project builds on an expansive and growing portfolio of projects to reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and improve quality of life throughout the City of Philadelphia, and it supports several priority initiatives included in the Plan 2035 Citywide Vision, the City's comprehensive plan. The final phase of the project includes underground installation of 1,600 feet of new sewers; utility, street, and sidewalk repair; installation of a new bike lane; and green infrastructure. Overall, the project will reduce the risk of sewer backups into more than 1,000 basements and reduce shallow street and building flooding. The project will also incorporate green infrastructure into street and highway improvements, including curb extensions, stormwater planters and street tree plantings.

In Virginia Beach, over \$25M will fund the Eastern Shore Drive Drainage Improvement Project. The mitigation grant will be used to improve infrastructure in the City of Virginia Beach and along Shore Drive that is being challenged by



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sea level rise, high tides, and stormwater runoff that results in regular roadway floodway during normal rain events. FEMA BRIC funding will pay for 70% of the \$35.9M total project cost. This project will include construction of two large stormwater pump stations, an automated tide gate, water collection systems, a rain garden, and the deepening of a canal to alleviate flooding in Lynnhaven.

The Eastern Shore Drive Drainage Improvement Project will provide protection up to the 1%-annual-chance-flood (100-year flood) and reduce flooding on major transportation corridors that serve as community lifelines. It will improve drainage for 614 buildings and mitigate the impacts of flooding on 11 properties that have sustained repeated losses. Additionally, the project will incorporate nature-based solutions, including a rain garden, meadow plantings and stream bank restoration. Signage will explain the initiative and engage residents in the importance and value of flood mitigation.

“Philadelphia and Virginia Beach are clearly demonstrating how sustained, long-term planning can result in holistic projects that reduce flooding and provide other benefits for many people. The threat from climate change cannot be overstated and we are proud to partner with Pennsylvania and Virginia to fund these resiliency projects through our Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities program,” said FEMA Region 3 Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney. “Congratulations to these two cities! We encourage other communities to work with their state hazard mitigation partners to apply for mitigation funding.”

Funding for these projects is provided through the FY21 Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities grant program. FEMA provides the funding to the Commonwealths of Pennsylvania and Virginia and then the Commonwealths will manage the disbursement of the funds to local communities. Since 2021, President Biden has provided additional funding to FEMA’s annual resilience grant programs, increasing them from \$700 million to \$1.16 in 2021 and more than tripled funding in 2022 to more than \$3 billion. FEMA anticipates announcements about projects selected for further review under FY22 funding later this summer.

More information on how communities can apply for BRIC funding and technical assistance can be found here: www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/applying.

State, local, tribal or territorial officials, as well as community leaders, interested in making the connection between equity and hazard mitigation are encouraged to



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contact us at FEMA-ExpandingMitigation@fema.dhs.gov.

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